

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ROME 18381 161905Z

46

ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4781

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

USMISSION NATO

DIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 18381

E.O. 11652: GDS

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SUBJECT: SOARES IN ROME PROMOTES HIS INITIATIVE FOR A MEETING OF
LATIN EUROPEAN COMMUNIST AND SOCIALIST PARTIES

REF: (A) STOCKHOLM 6328; (B) ROME 15273

SUMMARY: SOARES' VISIT TO ROME LAST WEEKEND WAS THE FIRST STOP
IN A WEEK LONG TOUR OF EUROPEAN CAPITALS TO EXPLAIN RECENT
DEVELOPMENTS IN PORTUGAL. IN ROME, A MAJOR OBJECTIVE WAS ALSO
PROMOTION OF HIS INITIATIVE FOR A MEETING OF LATIN EUROPEAN
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PAGE 02 ROME 18381 161905Z

SOCIALIST AND COMMUNIST PARTIES WHICH HE NOW HOPES TO CONVENE

IN EARLY JANUARY. THE VISIT PROVIDED NO EVIDENCE THAT THE WILL SUCCEED. END SUMMARY

1. PORTUGUESE SOCIALIST SECRETARY SOARES VISITED ROME LAST WEEKEND, DECEMBER 13-14, THE FIRST STOP OF A WEEK LONG TOUR OF EUROPEAN CAPITALS "TO EXPLAIN", AS HE PUT IT, "THE NEW COURSE OF THE PORTUGUESE REVOLUTION TO HIS FRIENDS AND COMRADES". (HE CAME TO ROME ON THE INVITATION OF HIS ITALIAN COUNTERPART, PSI SECRETARY DE MARTINO, AND WAS ACCOMPANIED BY AROOS DE CARVALHO.) ASIDE FROM THE PUBLICLY STATED PURPOSE OF HIS TRIP, A MAJOR OBJECTIVE OF HIS VISIT TO ROME WAS TO PROMOTE HIS INITIATIVE FOR MEETING OF LATIN AND EUROPEAN SOCIALIST AND COMMUNIST PARTIES.

2. WHILE IN ROME HE HAD PRIVATE MEETINGS WITH NENNI AND DE MARTINO, VATICAN DIPLOMAT AGOSTINO CASAROLI, SPANISH COMMUNIST LEADER SANTIAGO CARILLO, AND WITH PCI LEADER BERLINGUER (IN WHICH CARILLO PARTICIPATED). HE WAS ALSO THE PRIZE GUEST AT A SOCIALIST CONVENTION ON THE ITALIAN ARMED FORCES, AND A COMMUNIST RALLY ON SPAIN, JOINTLY SPONSORED BY THE ITALIAN AND SPANISH COMMUNIST PARTIES. HE LEFT MONDAY FOR PARIS TO MEET WITH MITTERAND. SOARES AMDE HIS MOST INTERESTING PUBLIC PRONOUNCEMENTS IN AN OVIOUSLY CAREFULLY PREPARED INTERVIEW GIVEN TO AVANTI AND PUBLISHED DECEMBER 14.

3. HIS CONFERENCE INITIATIVE: IN THE INTERVIEW, SOARES SAID ALL INVITEES HAD ACCEPTED HIS INVITATION EXCEPT THE PCP, WHICH EXPLAINS THE DELAY IN CONVENING IT. NOW THAT THE SITUATION IN PROTUGAL IS CLEARER, HE IS HOPEFUL THAT CUNHAL WILL RECONSIDER AND MAKE POSSIBLE ITS REALIZATION IN EARLY JANUARY.

4. THE SITUATION IN PROTUGAL: SOARES DENIED THAT NOVEMBER 25 WAS, AS VIEWED IN A QUESTION PUT HIM, A VICTORY OF THE CENTER OR RIGHT. HE EMPHASIZED THAT IT HAD BEEN A VICTORY OF THE NON-COMMUNIST LEFT. AS THE RIGHTIST DE SPINOLA DEVIATION OF THE REVOLUTION HAD BEEN DEFEATED MARCH 11, THIS TIME A LEFT EXTREME ONE, SYMBOLIZED BY VASCO GONCALVES, HAD BEEN DEFEATED. GONCALVES HAD TRIED TO INSTALL A MILITARY DICTATORSHIP OF THE LEFT. NNEITHER THE POLICY OF THE GRAND NATIONALIZATIONS NOR CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 ROME 18381 161905Z

AGRARIAN REFORM HAS BEEN BROUGHT INTO QUESTION.

5. ACCORDING TO SOARES, CUNHAL HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE OPPOSITE OF BERLINGUER; HIS PARTY HAS NOT ONLY LOST CERTAIN POSITIONS, BUT HAS BEEN FORCE TO READJUST ITS ENTIRE POLICY. HOWEVER, SOARES STILL CONSIDERS POSSIBLE AND USEFUL A DIALOGUE WITH THE PCP.

6. HE DESCRIBED THE SPLIT IN THE PPD AS AN INTERNAL PROBLEM OF THAT PARTY, WITHOUT GREAT SIGNIFICANCE. THE SPLIT CONFIRMS THAT THE PPD WAS NEVER A SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY, RATHER A LIBERAL (E.E., MODERATE CONSERVATIVE) PARTY WHICH CAN NO LONGER CLAIM THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC LABEL SINCE ITS SHIFT TO THE RIGHT.

7. COMMENT:THOUGH SOARES HOPES TO CONVENE HIS MEETING IN EARLY JANUARY, NEITHER HIS ITALIAN SOCIALIST HOSTS NOR HIS COMMUNIST INTERLOCUTORS SEEM TO SHARE HIS OPTIMISM. THE BRIEF "COMMUNIQUE" FOLLOWING HIS MEETING WITH NENNI AND DE MARTINO SPOKE ONLY OF A USEFUL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON THE MODALITIES AND TOPICS OF THE MEETING; AND SOARES' INTERVIEW WAS, TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, THE FIRST PUBLIC INDICATION THAT THE PCI HAD RESPONDED POSITIVELY TO HIS INVITATION LETTER REPORTED REFTTEL. APART FROM CUNHAL'S REFUSAL, WE DOUBT THAT THE PCI HAS ABANDONED THE RESERVATIONS IT SHARES WITH THE FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY.

8. AN INTERESTING ASPECT OF THE VISIT WAS THE OBVIOUS HERO-WORSHIP SOARES, LIKE MITTERAND, INSPIRES IN ITALIAN SOCIALISTS. APPLAUSE WHEN HE APPEARED AT THE SOCIALIST CONVENTION CONTINUED FOR OVER FIVE MINUTES. ASIDE FROM HIS VOCTORY OVER THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNISTS, HIS APPEAL MAY SPRING FROM RECOGNITION THAT HE POSSESSES A QUALITY ALL TOO SCARCE AMONG HIS ITALIAN COMRADES: GUTS.

9. FOR STOCKHOLM: IF POSSIBLE, WE SUGGEST YOU ADVISE SOARS' SWEDISH INTERLOCUTORS TO ASK HIM WHY HE MAINTAINS SUCH CLOSE RAP-PORT WITH THE SPANISH AND ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTIES, IN VIEW OF FACT THAT LATTER RELATIONSHIP ESPECIALLY ONLY MAKES IT MORE FIFFI-CULT FOR HIS ITALIAN SOCIALIST COMRADES TO COMPETE DOMESTI-CALLY WITH PCI.VOLPE

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